(b) if so what steps have been taken by Government to make justice inexpensive and easily accessible to all?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) and (b) The Government is aware of the need for speedy and inexpensive justice. Various steps have been taken by the Government in this regard. These include, *inter alia,* amendment of the Civil Procedure Code and the Code of Criminal Procedure increase in the number of posts of Judges/Judicial officers, establishment of easily accessible special courts/tribunals and adoption of alternative modes of dispute resolution, such as, arbitration and conciliation. Lok Adalats have been given a statutory base as supplementary forum for resolution of disputes.

The Lok Adalats have proved an effective mechanism for alternative disputes resolution through pursuasive and conciliatory approach. The enforcement of the Legal Service Authority Act 1987 is also a step forward in the direction to make justice inexpensive. On the basis of the information received from the National Legal Services Authority, total number of Lok Adalats held and number of cases disposed of by such Adalats from 1995-96 to 1998-99 were 35061 and 36,32,887 respectively.

Appointment in the constitution Review Committee

1315. SHRI V.N. GADGIL: Will the Minister for LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister had invited Shri R. Venkatraman to head the Constitution Review Committee and he had accepted the invitation; and

(b) whether the invitation was withdrawn owing to pressure from the powerful political quarters including D.M.K?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Hindu succession Act

†1316. SHRI JANESHWAR MISRA: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to State:

(a) whether it is a fact that most of the States have not made any amendment in the Hindu Succession Act to give women their right in property in Joint families; and

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the directions given by Government to these States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (A) Yes Sir.

(b) Department of Women and Child Development has requested the various State Government/Union territories Administrations to draw up necessary Legislative proposal to amend Section 6 of the Hindu Succession Act,, 1956 to give daughters their due share of coparcenary rights as has been done in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

Superintendence and control on the functioning of lower courts

1317. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the existing system of superintendence and control of Supreme Court and High Courts on the functioning of the lower curts;

(b) whether the system has worked successfully, if so,, the number of judicial officers punished for malfesance and misjudgement during the last three years; and

(c) if not, what corrective measures are proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL): (a) Under the Constitution of India, there is a single integrated system of Courts for the Union as well as the States which administer both Union and State laws, and at the head of the entire system stands the Supreme Court of India. Below the Supreme Court of India stand the High Courts of the different States and under each High Court there is a hierarchy of other courts called subordinate courts.

According to article 227 of the Constitution of India, every High Court shall have superintendence over all courts and tribunals throughout the territories in relation to which it exercises jurisdiction. The said article further provides that the High Court may call for returns from such courts; make and issue general rules and prescribe forms for regulating the practice and proceedings of such courts; and prescribe forms in which books, entries and accounts shall be kept by the officers of any such courts.